Adult Education Consortium

October 8, 2008 USOE-Room 241

Attending: Andrea Hales, Anita Craven, Connie Laws, Donica Bigelow, Herb Clark, James Andersen, Jeff Galli, Kathleen Johnson, Linda Oda, Sue Myers, Marty Kelly, Nate Southerland, Sandra Grant, Shauna South, Steve Schofield, Toni Myers, Wayne Mifflin, Brian Olmstead, Kellie Tyrrell

Welcome

Marty: I want to start with thanking you for your input. I also want to know how you felt yesterday went and what you thought; the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Wayne: I think that if we had distributed the information out to the directors' ahead of time we might have saved some of the questions and discussion. But the question was what do we give to them, and how do we give it to them.

Donica: I think a lot of people left frustrated. I think a lot of people felt like they did not get a voice in the decisions. They were not able to ask the kinds of questions they wanted or had enough time to be able to process it enough to know what to ask so they just started throwing stuff out. Do we ever have regional information meetings?

Marty: We have in the past and they were poorly attended.

Donica: Perhaps people would have felt they had a voice and would have been able to ask the pertinent questions if the information had been presented at a more localized regional level with state representation. I think it would have eased the pains they are feeling.

Anita: I think they felt like they did not have enough information soon enough and wanted to know more before the meeting. That was the impression I got from the people I was with. They felt cheated; they came in with 'this is how it is' but when we left, we still did not have a definite answer. That was frustrating. Part of it was nice because of the residency, that part everyone can live with. It is not going to be as big of a deal as anticipated.

Marty: It is frustrating for us, knowing that it was coming down the pike, from what the auditors have said. We had many brainstorming sessions about what the implications would be. It was serious; serious enough that we ended up taking the issues to the Board and subsequently they gave us directions.

Shauna: I felt the Board gave its approval for adult education, but did not want anything to affect K-12. I don't think they thought of any of the implications that would affect K-12, such as students dropping out.

Donica: Since I knew this was coming, I took a closer look at my program. There are a lot of kids that are going to benefit from this. People have not had time to process this.

Steve: These are big issues that are changing the focus and directions of our programs. People are going to need some time to process that. I am still trying to figure it out.

Donica: I am wondering if a regional format wouldn't be a better format for the December 19 meeting. The December meeting is when we will have policy is that correct?

Marty: We will have more direction after we go to the Board on November 7, because of the rule. I think the other piece Jeff wanted to have before we did the December meeting was the feeling from the field regarding the POM pieces, the percentages. It would possibly mean going back to the Board again to amend our board rule regarding the funding percentages.

Brian: I wish that we could do this regionally, but then the regional discussions are not shared. That is one of the difficulties of regional meetings. In terms of the discussion, it is never going to be a win-win. There are always going to be irritated people and those that are happy. Speaking on the POM reports, I had no problem. I noticed that South Sanpete won every time. So I am happy. But others lost every time. That is the problem whenever the funding formula gets worked on; there are always winners and losers. The whole nature of the meeting yesterday didn't seem like it was a discussion, it was more, 'this is what is going to happen'. I think there was irritation. I guess if that is what it is, then maybe that is how it needed to be presented. People were wondering are we discussing this, is this up for discussion, are we going to bounce this around or is this a done deal on November 7th. That was not clarified. If it is a done deal then these things need to be given out as information items.

Marty: I want to say it is a done deal in the sense the GED will be called an equivalency diploma. It is not a done deal as to whether we will to implement it. It is a done deal that we cannot give credits towards a diploma for successfully passing the GED Test.

Brian: Maybe that is what needs to be said. Those items need to be checked off, this is a done deal. These things are not up for discussion.

Marty: The other part that is not up for discussion is the payment of the two outcomes. Programs still wanted to focus on the high school diploma and receive payment for both the diploma and GED. I understand the difference between the two, but I also understand the industry and I think I also understand adults wanting to move forward. Was the discussion about keeping both of those variables in there and only funding one clear enough?

Donica: No. I think that everyone left confused. Some of the discussions near me were about the five credits. I thought we had cleared it up and then on my way out the door I still heard people discussing five credits. A lot of people left unclear as to what is a done deal and what are we still discussing.

Steve: Jim mentioned that yesterday too. We were sitting toward the back and we could hear people already getting the wrong idea. It should go out maybe regionally from you or from us.

Donica: I felt a little bit bad. I felt like maybe I should have given a heads up to the region. I had some regional people saying that this was the first time they had heard about this. I felt that maybe I should have done a better job letting my region know what is coming down the line.

Steve: I had those same thoughts and I went to Wayne and asked if I should be talking about this. I didn't know what was okay to discuss.

Donica: I think that people just really want to be heard. They need a venue where they can voice their opinion. I think that the way it was presented people did not think that it was thought through very well and I think that it was. It just didn't come across that way.

Wayne: I think we need to do a better job of getting information out to the directors before it happens. If we understand, we can respond to their questions. I think I know what I am talking about, but sometimes I find that I don't know.

Donica: Even if we don't know the answers, we can assure them that we can look into it or ask the state office.

Marty: It was failure on our part to give you enough information to go to talk to your regions. I was also hesitant giving a lot of information out before the meeting only because sometimes rumors start and issues are blown out of proportion.

Wayne: We want them to have faith in the consortium and if the consortium isn't armed with the information they need it is hard to respond. Even if we don't share information with the directors, the consortium can respond to questions. They can tell them what is going on and these are the things we have some control over and here are the things we don't have control over.

Shauna: On the GED survey, is there a reason that we did not include all of the adult education directors?

Marty: I did not do all of the adult education directors for the same reason we did not do all of the counselors and we didn't do the entire PTA, simply because we just wanted representation from around the regions, just a sampling. We did send it out to 242 plus. We also focused on the 16 year olds and the test. There weren't questions regarding the GED outcomes for adult education. As this is still a Board item it is not for distribution although we will review it and discuss it. We have compiled a summary of the entire survey and a summary from the subsections. The intent of the survey was to find if we should 1) lower the age for GED testing to 16 and 2) to deal with in-school youth with a GED preparation track. It had nothing to do with adult education.

I know there has been some question on whether passing the GED is now considered a diploma. I have heard it twice in two of the Board Curriculum Committee meetings. I very directly asked at the last meeting if passing the GED is considered the Utah Equivalency High School Diploma. The answer was yes. This committee made a motion and approved it. The motion then went to the general Board meeting. The head of the curriculum committee presented the outcomes to the general Board. My interpretation was that since the curriculum committee moved and approved this motion and the report was given to the general Board, that it was a go ahead. Apparently that is not the case. So I am confused as well. However, in the curriculum committee meeting and the general Board meeting we were instructed to write rule to effect that change.

So in regards to adults, we are to move ahead in the direction that passing the GED will be considered an equivalency diploma. The majority of the states call a GED an equivalency diploma.

Shauna: It was brought up that a group of adult education directors would like to go before the Board to state that they don't like the idea; they want to contend this idea of a GED being an equivalency diploma. What then?

Marty: We could say as a state that we won't administer the GED tests at all. However, 50% of the people that take the GED test never touch a foot in an adult education program. Those people are, for the most part, not coming back and complaining that they want a high school diploma. They are moving on with their life.

Brian: Is the root of this back to the issuance of the five credits? If that disappeared would that calm down?

Marty: I don't think I heard a lot of discussion about that. GED Testing Service policy states that Carnegie units of credit cannot be issued for successfully passing the GED test. We have been in violation of that policy for some time. I heard that people did not like the idea of calling a GED an equivalency diploma.

Donica: The discussions around me were centered on the five credits. They did not want to lose those five credits. That is why I asked a couple of times to clarify that the five credits will no longer be issued for successfully passing the GED. I am not sure that it was understood, that regardless of whether the GED is called an equivalency diploma or not, those five credits will no longer be issued for successfully passing the GED.

Marty: We had set the cutoff date for January 1, 2009, but after further discussion yesterday, we are setting the transition dates for July 1, 2009. This allows programs to finish with students currently in the system and make a clean transition. We will let GED Testing Services know of our intent.

Wayne: I still think that the credit issue boils down to the fact that people view the high school diploma as more viable than the GED. They don't want to lose that opportunity for their students to obtain a diploma.

Shauna: I heard that too. What if people want a high school diploma? Well, the GED equivalency will be a real diploma.

Marty: As a state, we have placed more value on the high school diploma. However, nationwide only four states issue an adult education high school diploma.

Anita: What about those people who started toward their diploma, took the GED, but have not completed the diploma; do we take away those five credits?

Marty: In my opinion, if a person were to have taken a GED prior to July 1, 2009, they could come back and participate in an adult education program and get a diploma. We are not going to go back and retro certificates to a diploma.

Donica: I think that any credits issued before July 1, 2009 on a GED awarded on a transcript, stay. The credits just cannot be added on to a transcript after July 1, 2009.

Brian: It does bring up a question. We are saying that a GED is equal to a diploma. Then how come a GED earned last year is not a diploma, but a GED earned after July 1, 2009 is a diploma. That is hard to justify. The other question is if someone earns their GED out of state and comes to Utah, wants to enter some program to earn a diploma and we turn them away because their GED is a diploma.

Marty: If the person earns a GED from a state that already recognizes the GED as a diploma, it stands. All but two states issue the GED as a diploma, so I really don't think that will be a problem.

The Board will not recognize a GED as a diploma until now—July 1, 2009—so technically the GED was not an equivalency diploma, although, industry and colleges accept the GED as an equivalent diploma.

Brian: I guess my point would be that today the Board is recognizing that it is equal. Is the Board going to say that only GEDs taken and passed after July 1, 2009 are considered an equivalency diploma or will they recognize the GED as equivalent regardless of when the test was taken?

Donica: It is my opinion that prior GEDs should not be grandfathered in.

Jeff: At the end of the day today we will have amended most of what we thought we were going to tell you from yesterday.

Anyone without a GED who enrolls on or after July 1, 2009 that successfully passes the GED will be awarded the Utah High School Equivalency Diploma. They can also work for the high school diploma if they do not get the GED first. No credits will be issued for the GED.

For people who are in UTopia, in adult education, it would be business as usual to July 1, 2009. There are people in the state that have a GED that want to obtain a high school diploma. If you enroll them after July 1, 2009, they would be allowed to work toward the high school diploma. The GED they currently have is only a certificate.

When you enroll in college as a freshman you know what the graduation requirements are. As long as you are continuously enrolled, those are your requirements. They don't change in your senior year. So the people currently in UTopia, who have made academic plans, we could allow them to continue with those plans as long as they are continuously enrolled. In other words, someone does have a GED and they want to pursue the high school diploma which will not be achieved until after July 1, 2009; we will allow them to count the GED toward the high school diploma. Once these students are un-enrolled, they will have to follow the new post-July 1, 2009 guidelines. We make a real

distinction that the equivalency diploma is a diploma because it has been issued as an equivalency diploma. GEDs not issued an equivalency diploma are still just a GED certificate.

This allows us to follow the recommendations of the audit without creating upheaval in the middle of a program year.

After July 1, 2009, programs will be funded for one outcome only; GED or high school diploma. I know that programs are worried about laying-off staff and believe they have to do something right away. The reality is that the effects from these changes will not be put in place until program year 11-12.

Brian: I don't think the grand total dollar is the final concern. If you move to a GED-type program compared to high school completion, which is a reality, contracted tenured teachers that teach outside core subject areas will see a reduction in their hours or in their positions.

Marty: I believe that our Board rule covers this issue. R277-273

"J. The teaching certificate and endorsement held by a staff member of a school district or community-based program shall be important in evaluating the appropriateness of the teacher's assignment, but not controlling. For instance, elementary teachers may teach secondary age students who are performing academically at an elementary level in certain subjects. Persons teaching an adult education high school completion class shall hold a valid Utah elementary or secondary education license and may issue adult education high school completion credits in multiple subjects. Non-licensed individuals providing instruction in ESOL, ABE or AHSC classes shall instruct under the supervision of a licensed program employee."

This allows teachers to teach in multiple subjects which should provide some flexibility in retaining teachers.

Sandi: GED preparation classes can also be credit bearing high school completion classes.

Marty: There has to be a focus on test taking and content.

Donica: The counseling aspect of adult education is going to become more crucial as we meet with the students to determine their focus and goals. Our program will encourage and counsel students that completing a high school completion diploma will make them a more rounded person and that they can start with that. However, the GED door is not closed to them and they can take it at any time. If they choose to take the GED they are done. I can see our recommendations would be that if you know where you are headed and what you want to do, take the GED and move forward. However, if you are still exploring what you want and are not sure where you are headed, the high school completion diploma will allow for that exploration. Counseling will need to be very student focused—what are their goals and needs in terms of adult education, especially for the high school aged students.

Marty: One of the directions the Board gave us is to write into our rule was that the K-12 high school aged students must be counseled before they leave the high school and when they come into the adult education program.

Brian: I still have some concerns on GED's taken before July 1, 2009 not being granted diploma equivalency. I think it is a legal battle waiting to happen. If you say it depends on the time you took the test and it is the exact same test that is a problem. Maybe you could say the 2002 series could be the equivalent to a diploma.

Marty: If we were to grandfather all GEDs taken in the state of Utah, those people would not be eligible to enroll in an adult education high school completion program because they would already have a diploma.

Brian: This also comes back to who will be issuing the diploma. On the face, this looks like a monster to issue diplomas to all of those people. However, I wonder how many that took the test in the 50's, 60's, or 70's would actually take the time to request their printed diploma. I know that you will not get my school district to award one of their diplomas to someone who has only taken the GED and has not gone through the school system.

Marty: The survey results on the question of who should issue this type of diploma were 44%-districts and charter schools, 40%-USOE, 54%-adult education programs.

Brian: If you are going to ask an LEA to issue their diploma to someone who has passed the GED, you are not going to win that battle.

Donica: I know of students that have taken the GED who will be coming back to me wanting to get their diploma. I think we will need to issue diplomas retroactively but I think there needs to be a hard date that we go back to.

Murray: I have been to visit with USOE attorney, Carol Lear. Board authority gives us license to do certain things. Under the Minimum school standards for public schools we can justify giving a high school equivalency credential (diploma) based on access to programs and graduation requirements. The Public School Board Association challenged the State Office of Education when the charter schools wanted to issue high school credentials. The districts argued that issuing credentials (diplomas) was their prerogative not the state Board's prerogative. Had that not come up this could be a shallow conversation. The State Board of Education, in that situation, prevailed and the State Board of Education was allowed to allow (delegate) charter schools the right to issue high school credentials. Yes, we could as a State Board, issue a high school equivalency diploma because of the authority under the law. We have a pretty strong case to say that we can as a state office issue a high school equivalency diploma. The concern Carol has is that there are many others lining up that want to have more authority given to them. For example home schools want to have the authority to issue high school diplomas. I suggested to her that if that is a big concern that maybe a district should issue the high school equivalency diploma as opposed to the state office issuing the equivalency diplomas or the colleges, universities, or GED testing sites. To me that is very mucky, but if that is the way we need to go, we work through the problems. Carol: I will give you a summary of what Murray and I were talking about and I also filled in Mary Shumway. There are several pieces to this, so I hope to not diverge too much from the main questions. I think, primarily, the question of if the state should do this is a policy question. I think, legally, you can do it. The statues exist which show the State Board of Education has the responsibility to set minimum standards for public schools and the State Constitution says the State Board of Education has the general control and supervision of public schools. You may have already heard some reactions from school districts that the State Board has never issued diplomas that only school districts or school district programs issue diplomas and they want to keep it that way. That could be a policy discussion or issue, but it is not a legal issue. Other things to consider in that discussion include a possible conflict with high school activities association in that students with diplomas cannot come back and participate in athletics, the equivalency diploma will also affect your high school graduation rates, and is the equivalency diploma going to be recognized for certain training programs such as police officer training and is this good or bad. Clearly, a person earning a GED equivalency diploma does not have the same experience as a student that has fully participated in a high school experience and earned a high school diploma, but does that matter. Are we still doing a better thing by giving an equivalency diploma with, as the Board said "considerable limitations and protections", than allowing those students to be out there with just a completion certificate. Then there is the issue that is not your biggest problem, but it is sort of mine, if you have the Board issuing a second kind of diploma because effectively the Board issues the Electronic High School diploma, how do I continue to stave off homeschoolers who say the Board should just issue diplomas. Their question is if the student takes the ACT and achieves a certain level and meets specific criteria, can't the state just give them a diploma? We have always been able to say that the State Board does not issue diplomas; you will have to get a school district to evaluate your student. I am not in a position to know what an adult education student does primarily. How does this benefit him to get the diploma, even though it is an equivalency diploma, as opposed to a completion certificate, and how does it dilute what other students are getting?

Jeff: A question that has come up a lot this morning, the Board hasn't made a decision on this, but assuming that they do and they make it effective today, you take the GED and pass it you can be issued a high school equivalency diploma. What about the many people who have already taken the GED and passed prior to today?

Carol: No. We change rules all the time. A government entity on a rational basis gets to change the rules in the middle of the game. It is not illegal, and they don't really have much of a right of action. If you want to be really fair or give extra opportunity, you can say "people who have done this for the past five years, who have also done this, this, and this, could also qualify."

Jeff: If we gave it to them on some sort of application process?

Carol: You could. It is just a question of what would overwhelm the system. That is primarily why they let you change the rules without giving some property right to all those people for whom the rules were different. We could say the same thing about the graduation requirements that have changed back and forth over the years.

Donica: I am thinking more about the high school kids that are going to want to come in and do a GED route. Right now the process is that they are released from the school district. If the equivalency diploma is being issued by someone other than the school district then those students are going to be showing up as dropouts, correct? If the school district issues them, then we can exit them as a GED completion, right?

Carol: I don't think those are givens. I think that you have to consider that you have to deal with a federal definition of a dropout and also a state definition a dropout.

Marty: The Board Curriculum Committee said last week if a student chooses to leave a K-12 situation and take the GED, that GED outcome would not be recorded on the SIS as an outcome. The students would be reported as a dropout because they chose to dropout. The outcome could not be recorded as a school district outcome because the GED was taken outside the scope of the K-12 system.

Donica: Our adult education program reports to the high school the people that have completed the GED. A copy of the GED is given to the high school and then the outcome is changed from dropout to GED to help lower the dropout rate.

Shauna: Would that be considered as your alternative high school?

Donica: This year it will be the alternative high school. In the past, because the alternative high school was not accreditated, we fell under the umbrella and the reporting system of the local high school.

Murray: So the age group of 16-19 year olds would be counted towards AYP.

Carol: I figure those things are spoilers, then to the extent possible you rethink the definitions.

Donica: Murray just hit this with the AYP. I can see this as a benefit for every school district in AYP to be able to offer this as an option as long as the school district is the one issuing the diploma. Then they have some control.

Marty: If the GED can't be taken until the kid has dropped out of school or has exited with the letters, how do you feed the outcomes back to the system once they are out of the system?

Donica: We exit the student as a dropout and if they pass the GED, we go back and report that this student passed the GED. The exit code is changed from a dropout to a GED completion. That is a state reported code.

Marty: The discussion the Board Curriculum Committee had last week resulted in a "no." If the student left K-12, the committee did not want the GED outcome to go back into AYP, the student is to be considered a dropout.

Donica: I think that needs to be switched. If high schools start offering GED prep classes to help these kids get ready to take a GED, it is before the time their class has graduated which they have the ability to do. I think it should be counted towards AYP.

Carol: Those kinds of things sound like internal policy decisions that you could make. You may have to hash it out with each other. There is nothing sacred about any of those definitions or decisions. They can be rethought if it seems to be the right thing to do. It is important to make them all work together. If it is the right thing to do and everyone agrees, including the Board, we could do it under the definitions that exist and the funding requirements that exist, then why wouldn't we?

Marty: They also said that they did not want the age lowered to 16.

Carol: That again, brings to mind more a policy discussion for you and the Board. If the Board decides it is going to make getting a GED too easy or you facilitate it too much, does that take away from what traditional educators believe is the best full program, public school opportunity. Expense is also a consideration. Every time a specific track, such as a GED track, is added to the system the money has to be divided to cover each track.

Marty: Roughly 5,000 people take and pass the GED. Approximately half of those people never set foot in an adult education program. How do we award an equivalency diploma to those persons that would never attach themselves to an adult education program? Would the testing center hand the person a piece of paper that says "you passed; you may go to Horizonte to pick up your GED diploma."

Carol: You would have to establish an online process or system that allows them to submit documents they have.

Murray: The way it was written out, when a person takes the GED and passes it, the testing center is the one who issues the score report and the credential. So all it would take is switching this piece of paper for another piece of paper.

Marty: Or would it be they would have to come to us and we issue the equivalency diploma.

Murray: If we left it with the testing centers?

Marty: So they can issue a diploma?

Carol: That does not sound very comfortable.

James: You will get the Salt Lake Community College and Skill Center issuing high school diplomas. I am not comfortable with that at all.

Brian: Under the authorization of the State Board of Education. Because the State Board is the one saying that a GED is equal to a high school diploma.

Carol: That part gets a little more comfortable.

James: I can very easily see higher education saying that they are in the business now of issuing high school diplomas. The people who are in the know will understand that it is through a certain process, but a lot of folks out there, legislators included, may not understand that process.

Carol: Public perception is that they are issuing diplomas. They do not know that it is under the authority of the State Office of Education.

Marty: We could put an attachment with the score report that says "Congratulations, you may pick up your GED equivalency diploma at such-and-such adult education program". The program location would be based on the address the person gives the GED testing center.

Murray: If the credential is so overtly obvious that it comes from the Utah State Office of Education, we could give another entity the authority to issue the credential on our behalf.

Wayne: Right now our program is sponsored through South Sanpete. I am not sure they are going to want to offer a certificate that has any ties to South Sanpete.

Murray: It would have the State Office's name on it. It would not be linked to a specific school district or program.

Carol: That does bring up another point. In getting these students out earlier, whether philosophically or educationally you have a problem with it or whether it's the school district saying we can't afford to lose any more students, you are going to get resistance from school districts saying we don't philosophically think that this is the best thing for 16 year olds, we lose the WPU's, and you want us to facilitate that? There is a matter of weighing what is best for the individual student and losing income for the whole school. That is a legitimate concern for school districts. We have all talked about it. This brings up the stupidity of funding for school districts based on seat time that we can't seem to escape. Unless we can figure out some way to say to the school district, sort of that notion of the Centennial Scholarship, if you facilitate this and cooperate you will get x amount of the WPU for every student that gets a GED.

James: Since you brought up the Centennial Scholarship, would 16 or 17 year olds passing the GED, getting the equivalency diploma, be considered an early graduate?

Carol: We would have to set it up so they couldn't get both.

Murray: Unless you set the GED passing standard higher.

Carol: Those of us who have been in public education all our lives, and I don't think we are just old fashioned, believe that students are best served by being in school until they are 18, allowing them the "whole" education experience, and encouraging them to do that, instead of pushing them out in the name of money. There are a few admirations and we all know them. They are better off in school.

Marty: Our numbers of 16-19 year olds are small. Primarily the adult education population served is the 25-44 year olds.

Carol: I will leave that for you to discuss this more at the policy level. You could set it up that if they are over a certain age then they get the equivalency diploma to benefit them employment wise, but you don't give an equivalency diploma to the 16 year old.

Marty: The issue is who can issue the high school equivalency diploma for any age? If we can do it through the testing centers and that is legal, great. If it is not legal and we have to have them go to an adult education program to get the equivalency diploma.

Carol: I could make the case that either of those are legal. The testing centers would be issuing the equivalency diploma "under the authority of the State Board of Education." That is the legal technicality of it, but you still have the perception problem of the testing center issuing diplomas.

Murray: Let's consider the score report itself as being the tool that determines whether a person gets an equivalency diploma or not. Thinking outside the box, anyone who gets a 500 on the GED gets a high school equivalency diploma,

anyone who gets between a 450 and 500 gets GED certificate. You can retake the GED to better your score. If a person needs a certain score for a college they can petition the testing center and myself to retake the test.

Marty: I don't like that way because it is a can of worms. It makes it more difficult for the people taking the test to know what the certificate means vs. the diploma. It means nothing.

Carol: I will leave this to you.

James: Back to where you said we could say people in the past five years could participate, is that a policy decision or a law?

Carol: That is a policy decision. You can go back to what you think is reasonable. You could change it today. The people who are in the pipeline who are within days may have some sort of property right, but if you say six months from now, this is going to be the standard and you change the rule, that is legally defensible. What I am saying to you, is if you want to consider fairness, if you want to say what does this mean if we go back two or five years, is that a more fair, more socially advantageous thing to do. That is also legally defensible.

James: You could have a district that has a lot of these (old GEDs) and now they are generating funding because you made a rule. Is that defensible? They are going to generate money.

Carol: Legally and fiscally, you can't now change the rules to have them create funding because that money hasn't been projected. They have counted on having to make money available. You can't tie funding to that. All you can tie to it is a person's enhanced credential. It just doesn't fiscally make sense to say that we are going to give school districts credit for these without knowing where the money is going to come from.

Marty: There were some concerns at looking at the 17 year old who is out-of-school who has to show proof of residency because they are no longer under the umbrella of the K-12 system.

James: They have to bring in a parent is what it reads.

Carol: Until they are 18. There are a couple of ways to look at it. Some of that does get into a policy discussion. There has always been a standard for a student that could show that he was truly emancipated. There is now a process per two legislative sessions ago, a legal process, for a student to become emancipated, which didn't exist before. Students who may hit roadblocks in getting service could be counseled to go through the emancipation process. However, school districts have always said if a student can show that he is living on his own and we know that he is living on his own, there are some indices for that, we will serve him as an emancipated student.

Marty: So we are talking about our 17 year old out-of-school youths, 17 years of age (June or later birthday) or older without a high school diploma, but whose class has graduated, who is a Utah resident, who intends to graduate from a K-12 program, with parental/guardian consultation and written approval. Does the parent still have to be involved with the kid whose class has graduated?

Carol: I think our concern is do we really want students who are minors, even though they are only technically minors, making that decision without any parental guidance.

Marty: So if their class has graduated and the student didn't graduate, do we still need a parent?

Carol: Technically, he is still a minor, so a parent should be involved. It would be possible for you to say for that very narrow group of students age 17 and older whose class has graduated that a parent does not need to be involved. However, you may have parents that do have an issue with that.

James: If I contact all the people in Salt Lake City that have taken and passed the GED, could I have them come into to my program and give them a diploma and do I get to count them for funding purposes on that diploma?

Marty: You mean switching the GED certificate for an equivalency diploma?

James: Yes.

Marty: No.

James: So there is no funding of diplomas for switching from the old GED to the new equivalency diplomas.

Marty: Correct, there is no funding for switching a GED certificate to an equivalency diploma. Is there a window, a time frame, which you would allow a person to exchange their GED certificate for an equivalency diploma after July 1, 2009? How far back (what date) do you want to allow people to be able to take advantage of this? Do you want to go back to 2002 when the new series came into effect?

Discussion on time frame to exchange a GED for an equivalency diploma

- Must be a GED that was taken in the state of Utah.
- Must be consistent across the state.
- Persons wishing to exchange a certificate must be able to provide documentation proving their identification.
- USOE/Adult Education will accept GEDs passed from January 1, 2002 (latest series) to June 30, 2009 for exchange.

Rules tentatively agreed upon

- GED completed before 7/1/08, person may enroll in an adult education program between 7/1/08-6/30/09 and may work on a high school diploma and can apply 5.0 credits toward a high school diploma.
- Persons who are enrolled in adult education program and the data is in UTopia may apply GED credits to a
 diploma and can continue in the 2009 program year or future years to complete the high school diploma.
- The managing program may claim the high school outcome upon completion of the high school diploma in the year it is completed as long as the person meets enrollee status.
- A GED completed July 1, 2009 or after may earn a high school diploma, but no credits will be applied toward the diploma.
- A GED successfully completed/passed between January 1, 2002 and June 30, 2009, the original GED certificate
 can be exchanged for a high school equivalency diploma by petitioning to the USOE GED state administrator and
 providing proof of evidence as defined by the GED state administrator.

Funding

Program year 08-09 funding is based on the 06-07 URAED data. Outcomes will be funded using the current funding formula percentages. Program year 09-10 funding will be based on the BETA data from UTopia 07-08 using the relaxed POM (Program Measures Outcome Report). Programs will be able to recognize enrollee by headcount (persons with 12 contact hours), all contact hours for both participants and enrollees, all GEDs regardless of student contact hours, all diplomas regardless of student contact hours, all the level gain for enrollee status, and all credits regardless of student's contact hours.

The data for this program year, 08-09, will be based on the real POM. This is where it all changes and the changes will affect the funding for program year 10-11. The changes are:

- for the entire program year July 1, 2008 June 30, 2008 programs will be paid for;
 - o 1) All enrollee status students by head count,
 - o 2) participant contact hours up to 11.99
 - o 3) All contact hours for enrollee status students,

- o 4) All level gains for enrollee status students, and
- o 5) All credits for enrollee status students.

Program year 11-12 funding is based on data from program year 09-10. Outcomes for this year will be:

- 1) First outcome—GED Equivalency Diploma or Adult High School Diploma will be paid for enrollee status students,
- 2) Enrollee status students head count,
- 3) Participant contact hours up to 11.99,
- 4) All contact hours for students with enrollee status,
- 5) All level gains for enrollee status students, and
- 6) All credits for enrollee status students.

Further GED discussion

- People walking in off the street will not be able to get a diploma in exchange for their eligible GED. They must go through the state GED administrator.
- Protocol from the USOE adult education will need to be created for the exchange of a GED certificate for an equivalency diploma.
- A student enrolled in an adult education program may decide to exchange a GED certificate for an equivalency diploma and cease to work in an adult education program or return to an adult education program in the future.
- Still no consensus on who will be the issuing agency for the Utah High School Equivalency Diploma.
 - o GED testing centers are an option, but do not know if they want this responsibility.
 - What would public and legislative perception of who is actually issuing the diploma if it is someone other than the USOE?

Lunch and Group discussion of Board Rule

Discussion included:

- Changes Marty had made based on feedback from Directors' meeting--licensure
- Changes/additions requested by the State School Board—16-19 year olds in adult education for credit recovery.
- Proof of Residency for the 16-19 year olds whose class has graduated
- Out-of-school youth eligibility to return to traditional K-12 programs and the GED issues
- Funding for out-of-school youth—WPU/state funding—Dual Enrollment
- Credits for GED can be awarded through June 30, 2009
- Entity responsible for issuing the equivalency diploma
- Funding formula adjustments/changes required by audit
- Independent audits for programs

Funding Formulas

- Possibly send information regarding the funding formulas to the directors before the December meeting.
- Directors need to be aware of funding issues before March.
- Scenarios given to the directors would be based on legislative money that we have not yet received.
- If we alter the funding formula, discussions need to be based on philosophy, not the wins and losses of specific programs.
- The supplemental due date for the first round will be pushed back to October 15.
- Possibility of supplemental requests being reduced by the amount of carryover a program has at the time the supplemental is approved.
- It was determined that December was too long to wait to have a directors' meeting. November 19 was decided as the new date.

Discussion of October 7th Directors' meeting

James: What were people most upset about yesterday?

Marty: I think it was my presentation. I went in with the idea that I wanted to couch the audit as best I could, because I had heard that there were audit discussions rolling around and why weren't we providing information. The other item was that we couldn't provide solid information because we didn't know the direction of the Board. We have been working with the Board for two months. I didn't want to put out information in an email and create a stir, but I also didn't want to call another meeting before the Board meetings since we did not have direction. I choose to hold on to the information until we had something I felt to be constructive. I also tried to split the information into the pieces the CBOs need and the longer piece the districts need. I have heard very distinctly in both Board meetings and in the committee meetings that we are to move forward.

James: One of the issues was the GED? People were upset about that.

Donica: That was the big one. The credits were another issue.

Sue: Those are such fundamental changes. They are huge.

Marty: That opens a whole can of worms for the 16-19 year olds. If you have an industry standard, what happens? Do we move this so the 16 year olds can take the GED as well? Do we use that as a dropout prevention tool within the K-12 system? That did not get positive responses on the survey. It still has merits. There are a lot of ramifications. We were ordered to start drafting the rule, so the directors needed to see the rule. It is all theoretical, it has huge implications.

Shauna: This announcement meant for many directors that they have to change the way they run business in their programs.

Jeff: The audit does not force us to change the funding formula at all. Is there some indication that you as this group have seen or heard that we want to change this funding formula?

Donica: No. What people don't understand is that all you are doing is taking what used to be two pots and dumping it into one pot.

Jeff: We don't have to talk about that at all. That is just the way that it is going to be. Everything else can stay the same. Is there some driving need for us to change the funding formula?

Marty: When we originally talked about changing the funding formula, my thoughts were that I am always harping about intensity and duration. If you are going to make some change in the funding formula because of the GED/Diploma one outcome, now is the time to move ahead to look at adjusting the funding formula based upon intensity and duration. Our federal grants will be opened for a new competition in Spring 2009. Right now the CBOs are held to no accountability. That is something that will be addressed.

Shauna: If we are going to change it, let's look at the things that need to be changed and do it all at once. The fact that the majority of our students are not adult high school completion students, perhaps the percentage for level gains should be increased. We are serving more ABE students. Should the level gains be equivalent to the GED?

James and Donica: I agree with that philosophy.

Marty: Please forward information to your regional directors that it is business as usual for the balance of this year. We are moving forward with the GED equivalency diploma board rule issue. Proof of residency is in place.

Steve: If we send an email stating what you just covered, would that be enough?

Marty: Please add that we will be moving the December Directors' meeting to November so that we can share feedback from the Board meeting and to discuss the funding formula.

Full Consortium 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Welcome and introductions

Marty: For the last six months we have been involved in a legislative audit. The auditors were looking for duplication of services between DWS and higher education and adult education. No duplication of services was found. The auditors did find a duplication of funding, programs were considered to be double dipping because clients were getting their GEDs and within 30 days they were completing their high school diploma. Programs were being funded on both outcomes. The auditors' finding requires us to adjust our funding formula and eliminate the double dipping. There were two other issues as well. One was residency of Utahans. We have not required proof of residency in our programs. We will now have to prepare a procedure for validating residency in Utah. The Directors' Consortium has met and discussed various items for documentation and standards, anywhere from a driver's license to a state ID card, to a government form letter that is in the client's name showing a Utah address. We have written policy which has been reviewed by our attorney. She approves of the procedure and requirements so we are moving forward with implementation of the policy as of November 1, 2008. The last item involved Senate Bill 81. The discussion was about whether undocumented persons are entitled to public or local benefits. We researched the citations cited in SB81 and they all define public or local benefits as post-secondary education. The auditors defined adult education as postsecondary education options because the majority of our clients are over the age of 18. We countered that in our outbriefing which included the auditor general, Carol Lear-USOE attorney, and Superintendent Patti Harrington. We took the stance that we are not post-secondary education. We have subsequently gone to the Board of Education with this information for their direction. After the Board meeting in September, we formulated a study group comprised of various stakeholders in the community and in education. This study group also took the stance that adult education is not a post-secondary institution. We do not provide post-secondary services to anybody, therefore we defined adult education as below the collegiate level and we asked that a letter be forwarded to the auditor general with this definition. The letter will state that we have corrected the residency finding by writing policy with implementation effective November 1, 2008, whereby programs will move forward to denote proper documentation of residency with each student. We are hoping that SB81 will have a lot of discussion this next legislative session and that it will be repealed or will go to court. There has been discussion regarding the GED/diploma. We are writing board rule that recognizes the GED as an equivalency diploma since it is recognized by industry and higher education. The Board of Education Curriculum Committee wants to call it the "Utah High School Equivalency Diploma." They asked us to survey our constituents as to whether or not the age for administering the GED should be lowered to 16 and whether or not a GED preparation program should be used as another track within high schools to prevent dropouts. A survey was sent to 242 people that included higher education, superintendents, charter school principals, high school principals, high school counselors, adult education, DWS, vocational rehabilitation, the governor's office and various other people. The results were varied. We found that it is okay to call the GED an equivalency diploma but not okay to offer preparation tracks in the K-12 system. As a result of this survey, we may not be lowering the age of GED options to 16 year olds in school. The survey supported moving forward with the high school equivalency diploma and calling the GED as such. Utah is one of only four states in the U.S. that offers an adult high school completion program in addition to the GED. This will bring us in line with the other states in offering the GED as an equivalency diploma. We met with the adult education directors yesterday. The meeting was less than optimal. We talked about the proposed Board rule changes that we are in the process of rewriting. We also talked about the possibility of having to change our funding formula because of the perceived GED/Diploma double dip issue. People were rather traumatized

News from the Regions

Steve: Western region is working with DWS using DWS TABE assessments and it is working wonderfully.

Marty: Are you getting DWS referrals and are DWS clients active as students?

Steve: Instead of us administering the TABE to their clients they are administering the TABE and then referring the clients that need to be referred. DWS sends me an email with the TABE results. We are getting a few people coming in.

Marty: Mountainlands?

Anita: We have a huge amount of new students this year. We have added more classes, more classroom seats, it is just overflowing. I think the whole region is feeling the frustration of the changes. I did email to let them know that I was coming today. I sent them a copy of SB81. I think getting them the information from this meeting will help a lot.

Marty: What about referrals from rehabilitation and DWS?

Anita: Not very many so far.

Marty: The number of clients in adult education is increasing with the downturn in the economy.

Connie: Higher education is also experiencing an increase in registration.

Marty: The auditors had some questions about why our numbers were down. Jim, what is happening in the Central region with referrals?

Jim: I think we have the referral processes in place. We have met with a couple of service centers for the Department of Workforce Services to talk about pathways. The FERPA pathway has changed for out-of-school youth. Now we are sending the exemptions to the designated partners. We are now identifying our exemptions and at the end of the month we are sending those directly to the approved partners as listed on the letter signed by parents. No longer does the Department of Workforce Services or other agency need a copy of that letter. Granite and Salt Lake Districts keep a copy of the exemptions on file. The previous pathway took considerably longer and by the time the partners got the names of the out-of-school youth they were gone. We are hoping this will allow better communications between the partners and out-of-school youth.

Marty: When did this process start?

Jim: It is just starting now. It was just approved by the DWS youth council meeting last month.

Marty: I had a call from Steve Labla about dissolving the basic education committee for the Central Region. He said that DWS unit managers feel as though the relationship between the adult education providers and the units are solid enough that they don't need the collaboration intensity. I am concerned that this would set precedence within the other regions especially when the state office is encouraging the development of this approach throughout the other regions. This committee also serves as a link to the USOE. The October meeting may focus on this issue.

James: I think that adult education programs should meet with the staff at each DWS offices on a monthly basis. We are meeting at one level and the people that are actually doing the work are on another level. I think one of the most effective meetings we had was where we talked to all the case managers. It makes a huge difference when they can attach a face to a program.

Kathleen: Steve has talked to me as well. I told him that no one wanted to have a meeting just to have a meeting, but it had been set up originally throughout the state to make sure our pathways and referral processes were in place. Maybe instead of cancelling it, maybe you want to have it twice a year. If you are being "meeting'd" to pieces, let's look at it and see what works.

Connie: All of the regional councils are supposed to report out tomorrow on their basic education during the regions council chairs. It will be interesting to hear the reports. The Regional Council Chairs meeting begins at 9:00 a.m. The Youth Council meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.

Marty: Within the regions have you been involved in helping/working/collaborating with all of the agencies within the regional council? The English Language Center in the Northern region was trying to build a relationship with the DWS regional council and related agencies. What about Mountainlands? Have you been involved?

Anita: I have been to a couple of the meetings.

Marty: Are they talking about education?

Connie: They had gone a different direction. They were doing some activities with employers on the council and basic education with companies who needed to send their employees back for basic education. They were trying to get employers to take an interest in their workers who needed some refresher in basic education or needed to receive their GED.

Marty: One of the focuses in adult education in the future will be an emphasis on transitions to post-secondary and into training programs. Murray Meszaros and Shauna South have been assigned to lead this project and to put together a plan. It behooves all of us to connect with our students in an ongoing process with life transitions, but in particular as they are getting closer to graduation to help them discover what their next steps could be – education and career. For those students who have a goal of entering or retaining employment, are programs involving them with rehabilitation, DWS, and higher education and talking about those options as resources. CTE has been working on developing a health education track and looking at the jobs that are most in need of employees right now. That will be talked about tomorrow at council. Has IHC been affected by the turn in the economy?

Herb: It hasn't affected health care. Our biggest challenge is what is happening to our reserves that are invested. To get the highest bond rating, which we have, you have to have over 200 days of cash on hand. We are right at 200 days currently, but in the past we usually had 225 days.

Marty: Our numbers showed that we served approximately 21,000 persons last year. That is somewhat down from the year before, but we are hoping that the number goes up this next year. We also renewed our Department of Workforce Services Refugee Grant this year. Five programs will receive funding this year; Asian Association, Granite School District, Horizonte in Salt Lake School District, English Language Center in Logan, and the English Skills Center. Adult education represents the USOE on the State Refugee Advisory Board. As a result, we have an assignment to identify and close the gaps ensuring that the educational needs are adequately met for all persons K-adulthood. We have formulated a committee that will be meeting shortly to start addressing the needs of refugees. I have also had the opportunity to attend the CMAC meeting which meets to assure that minorities are represented in educational opportunities equitably across the state. I noticed at the last CMAC meeting that there is not a representative from the refugee community. I will to work with the State Refugee Advisory Board to see that a refugee r will represent the refugee community. We would also like that person to help us identify the gaps within refugee education for the children and adults.

Sandi: Adult education is also on the Refugee Providers Committee.

Marty: If you listen to Pam Purledge talk, refugees are the workforce of tomorrow.

Herb: At IHC we see the most refugees in the medical profession. If it wasn't for foreign medical students, I don't know if we would have any doctors in this country. It is amazing how many there are.

Marty: They are an untapped resource. As we explore options for this population, we are finding that there are other populations such as special education, persons with disabilities and others that we need to ensure we are preparing through adult education so they can gain the skills and competencies to transition to post-secondary to be the workforce of tomorrow.

Nate: What role does adult education play in helping people transferring credentials from out-of-country?

Marty: None.

Nate: Is there any kind of referral process?

Marty: No.

Sandi: Part of the problem that comes up in the providers meeting is that several of the professions will not accept credentials from other countries.

Herb: A physician has to complete all of the training in the United States regardless of what certifications they already have.

Nate: UEN offered several Spanish Workplace Safety training, paid for by the Utah Labor Commission and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. We had a great response. We are trying to set up another in Provo. There might be a need for some communication because I don't think that communication pathway is being utilized. There are companies that are struggling with workplace training and safety issues that may have not considered helping their employees get into an ESL program. The Labor Commission works directly with a lot of employers who come to them looking for workplace rights issues but also in a lot of cases, I get the sense the employers are asking where to access services for their employees. I am wondering if adult education could talk to the Labor Commission informing them of the services adult education offers.

Marty: We can do that.

Linda: I want to mention that one of the roles of the Office of Ethnic Affairs is to have a liaison and a connection with agencies. The Labor Commission is one of those agencies. We invited three people from the commission (three directors). It is really interesting the intricacies of what they are doing. They are talking about exactly what you are talking about, about employment, accidents, compensation. One of the most fascinating things you might be interested in is that all three people said that it's not the status of person that comes in and needs help; it is more that they are people. They have to ignore the fact that they are undocumented or documented. Just hearing their assertions of what they are doing is pretty incredible. They gave an example of an Asian person having a workplace accident and not being allowed to register with Workman's Compensation. You might want to consider that kind of a thing in knowing what they are doing.

On a different topic, we are hosting an Education Conference on November 8, 2008 at West High School from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. This conference targets parents. We are encouraging educators, community members, and students to attend. We would welcome adult education to be a part of this conference. There will be information booths. The premise of the whole conference is how to successfully educate ethnic minority students. We are doing some really unique things with the conference. We have six sessions, but twelve presenters, with every English speaking session there will be a companion session in Spanish.

Nate: Is there the opportunity for service providers to come and set up a booth?

Linda: Definitely. I will send that information to Marty via email. There is an application form for an information booth. The booth is free. The conference is also free to parents.

Marty: Nate, can you talk to us about what is happening with the KET/GED pilot?

Nate: Sure. Kentucky Educational Television has a multi-media GED preparation program which includes 39 ½ hour segments, a set of workbooks, and a set of free online activities. We have been broadcasting the TV programs on UENTV for seven years. In the past we did not make a concerted effort to have the local adult education programs try out the programs and incorporate it into what they are doing. We decided to make that effort and asked for volunteers. Thirteen adult education programs across the state volunteered to implement a KET/GED program in a focused way with the intention of using the program as a distance learning tool for clients that are unable to attend the on-site programs. We are using this year to implement the program and see where the snags are. A couple of advantages are that since Utah already licenses this program it is relatively inexpensive, it is multi-media format so folks that do not learn well by reading and listening have other options and it can be delivered at a distance. The videos and workbooks are being well-utilized, but the online portion has not been utilized as much. The online portion may require some additional follow-up training. The programs have seemed happy with the quality of materials.

Marty: The other pilot that we are running is a TABE Class E testing project. This is a new English language test for ESL clients. We are running it in Uintah, Ogden, and Washington adult education programs.

Nate: With digital broadcast television, each of the channels that broadcast in the state can air multiple stations. KUED and UEN are using that to try to reach the non-native English speakers and some of the foreign born. Channel 7-3 is 24-hour PBS Spanish station. UEN 9-2 collects and broadcasts the news streams from around the world. This is very welcome to people from other countries as it allows them to keep up on what is happening in their home country.

Andrea: A subgroup of the WEEDA committee comprised of DWS, higher education, and public education went through an RFP process—we wrote the RFP, sent it out, and received six proposals for a new "Careers Choice" program. We did not consider one of the proposals as it did not meet the criteria in the RFP. We evaluated the other five and decided to have two of them give us a presentation. They presented and we made a decision. Upper management will review our decision and let us know what the final decision will be. This vendor will take the place of Choices and Utah Mentor. It should be able to encompass a lot of things that DWS already has and a lot of things that higher education already has. We want it to be the platform that will bring it all together. Since the contract has not been signed, I am not at liberty to reveal who was recommended to upper management.

Marty: Other news from the field or agencies that we can share with the adult education programs?

Kathleen: We have our two GED pilot programs up and running. We looked at our TANF cases and found that approximately 10% had completed their high school diploma or GED. We have been working closely with the Salt Lake Skills Center and Ogden School District. We started in May with writing the program. We have 21 people enrolled in the program in Ogden. If they complete the program the student can earn up to \$1,500. We wondered how this was going to work, but we have already had three people complete the Ogden program. We had a delay with the start date with the Salt Lake Skills Center. The Salt Lake Skills Center was closed during the month of August. They have 19 people enrolled. The pilot in Salt Lake is an open entrance/open exit program. The Ogden pilot is a traditional adult education classroom setting starting at 8:30 a.m. and attending 6 hours a day.

Marty: Thank you for spending your time with us and bringing us up to date and letting us ask questions to help us improve our adult education program. We appreciate your support and your collaboration.